

Assessment of psychopathology in Portuguese referred children: preliminary psychometric data with the ASEBA battery

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Introduction

The validation of instruments to specific populations is relevant to health psychology, since a well-structured assessment allows the design of enhanced interventions (Ivanova, 2007). In mental health services, children and adolescents should be understood as being involved in many contexts, dealing with different people, so it's necessary to know how do they develop in many dimensions (Zeanah, 2000). It is estimated that 10 to 20% of children in school age have some emotional or behavioral problem, (Mash, & Dozier, 2002), therefore an assessment that is based in the report of multiple informants will provide more information about the problem (Achenbach, Krukowski, & Ivanova, 2005).

Goals

The present study aims to validate the Portuguese version of the ASEBA battery (Achenbach, 2001). In this poster, preliminary results on the CBCL 6-18, TRF, and YSR, in referred population, are presented.

Method

Sample

314 clinically referred children/adolescents, aged between 6 and 18 years old (M=11; DP=3,05). 57,7% are male, 44,6% are the eldest child and only 29,4% never received any kind of intervention from mental health services. 56,3% of the fathers and 52,8% of the mothers belong to a low SES group.

Instruments

- Sociodemographic questionnaire;
- Diagnostic questionnaire;
- *Child Behavior Checklist* (CBCL; Achenbach, 2001; Portuguese version: Gonçalves, Dias, & Machado, 2007);
- *Teacher Report Form* (TRF; Achenbach, 2001; Portuguese version: Gonçalves, Dias, & Machado, 2007);
- *Youth Self Report* (YSR; Achenbach, 2001; Portuguese version: Gonçalves, Dias, & Machado, 2007).

Results

Internal consistency

		Cronbach's α			
		Mother	Father	Teacher	Adolescent
CBCL	Internalizing	.846	.863	-	-
	Externalizing	.910	.887	-	-
	Total Score	.933	.933	-	-
TRF	Internalizing	-	-	.869	-
	Externalizing	-	-	.913	-
	Total Score	-	-	.961	-
YSR	Internalizing	-	-	-	.875
	Externalizing	-	-	-	.888
	Total Score	-	-	-	.939

Gender differences

		N	Mean	S.D.	t	p
Gender	Internalizing – CBCL mother	139	15,97	8,46	-2,26	.025
	Male	84	18,80	9,96		
	Female					
	Externalizing – CBCL mother	139	17,59	10,19	2,70	.008
	Male	84	13,68	10,99		
	Female					
	Total score – CBCL mother	139	59,34	26,05	1,17	0,24
	Male	84	54,85	30,23		
	Female					
	Internalizing – cbcl father	97	13,31	7,74	-0,65	0,520
	Male	64	14,16	8,73		
	Female					
	Externalizing – CBCL father	97	13,84	9,18	2,69	.008
	Male	64	9,90	8,88		
	Female					
	Total score – CBCL father	97	49,72	23,48	1,93	0,056
	Male	64	42,05	26,56		
	Female					
	Internalizing – TRF	61	10,84	7,33	-0,22	0,830
	Male	33	11,18	7,58		
	Female					
	Externalizing – TRF	60	14,93	13,43	5,64	.000
	Male	33	3,97	5,05		
	Female					
	Total score – TRF	61	54,43	31,43	5,02	.000
	Male	33	28,24	19,09		
	Female					
	Internalizing – YSR	54	14,80	8,66	-3,29	.001
	Male	39	20,82	8,81		
	Female					
	Externalizing – YSR	54	15,54	9,33	1,11	0,271
	Male	39	13,46	8,32		
	Female					
	Total score – YSR	54	74,41	26,01	-0,78	0,438
	Male	39	78,56	24,50		
	Female					

Discussion

- In line with previous studies, all the scales are psychometrically robust, regarding internal consistency (Rescorla, Achenbach, Ivanova, Dumenci, Almqvist, Bilenberg, Bird, *et al.* 2007).

- Higher scores of externalizing problems in males and internalizing problems in females were also reported in different studies (Achenbach, & Rescorla, 2001; Gresham & Kern, 2004).